



Political Affairs Digest

A daily summary of political events affecting the Jewish Community

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House of Commons Written Answers

Internet: Antisemitism

David Pinto-Duschinsky (Labour) [7391] To ask the Secretary of State for Science, Innovation and Technology, what recent estimate he has made with Cabinet colleagues of the number and proportion of antisemitic attacks associated with small forums spreading online hate.

Feryal Clark: The Online Safety Act (OSA) establishes Ofcom as the UK online safety regulator. The OSA gives online platforms new duties where there are risks of their services being used to carry out certain priority offences, including posting illegal antisemitic content which stirs up hatred.

Ofcom will set out steps in codes of practice that different platforms can take to fulfil these duties. Ofcom must consult on proposed steps. For these consultations, it publishes evidence about in-scope harms. For example, in November 2023, it published research into these matters for [its consultation on](#) its OSA 'illegal content duties' proposals.

<https://www.ofcom.org.uk/online-safety/illegal-and-harmful-content/protecting-people-from-illegal-content-online>

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2024-10-04/7391>

The Online Safety Act, referred to above, can be read at

<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2023/50/contents>

Internet: Antisemitism

David Pinto-Duschinsky (Labour) [7392] To ask the Secretary of State for Science, Innovation and Technology, what assessment he has made of the potential merits of using powers under Schedule 11 of the Online Safety Act to extend category 1 regulation to online forums to help tackle antisemitic hate speech online.

Feryal Clark: The Secretary of State for Science, Innovation and Technology will make Regulations pertaining to Schedule 11 of the Online Safety Act as soon as

reasonably practicable.

Under the Act, all user-to-user services – including online forums - will be required to proactively tackle illegal hate speech, such as illegal antisemitic abuse. If such a service is likely to be accessed by children, they will also be required to protect children from encountering specific types of legal but harmful content. This includes legal content which is abusive or incites hate on the basis of race or religion.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2024-10-04/7392>

Schedule 11 of the Online Safety Act, referred to above, can be read at

<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2023/50/schedule/11>

Religion: Education

Peter Bedford (Conservative) [7345] To ask the Secretary of State for Education, whether she plans to review the opt outs for the teaching of religious education in secondary schools.

Catherine McKinnell: The government has launched an independent review of Curriculum and Assessment and will also consider any changes it wishes to make to support the aim of delivering a rich and broad curriculum for every child whilst the review is conducted.

The Curriculum and Assessment Review group has launched a call for evidence, setting out a number of key questions and themes on which it would particularly welcome evidence and input to help direct the focus of the review and engagement with the sector over the autumn term. Anyone can access and respond to the call for evidence to provide a view on any area of the curriculum.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2024-10-04/7345>

The call for evidence referred to above can be read at

<https://consult.education.gov.uk/curriculum-and-assessment-team/curriculum-and-assessment-review-call-for-evidence/>

Israel: Palestinians

Kirith Entwistle (Labour) [6865] To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, if he will visit the Bolton Council of Mosques to discuss the conflict in Israel and Palestine; and if he will invite that Council to a meeting in his Department.

Hamish Falconer: As of now, there are no scheduled visits for the Foreign Secretary to Bolton. However, the Foreign Secretary welcomes correspondence from the Bolton Council of Mosques to learn more about their initiatives and efforts.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2024-10-04/6865>

UK Parliament Early Day Motion

Stephen Flynn (SNP) [243] **Death of Rt hon. Alex Salmond, former First Minister of Scotland** – That this House expresses its profound sorrow at the death of former First Minister of Scotland, Rt hon. Alex Salmond; sends its sympathy and condolences to his family, friends and legions of followers; recognises his immense contribution to Scottish public life and Scotland's modern political story; and deeply appreciates his service over many decades as an MP, an MSP and as First Minister to the people of Scotland and the cause of Scottish independence.

<https://edm.parliament.uk/early-day-motion/62585>

Scottish Parliament Motion

John Swinney (First Minister, SNP) [S6M-14899] Motion of Condolence – That the Parliament expresses its shock and sadness at the untimely death of Alex Salmond; offers its deep sympathy and condolences to his family and friends; appreciates the many years of public service that he gave as an MP, MSP, and First Minister of Scotland, and recognises the substantial and significant contribution that he made over many decades to public life, Scottish and UK politics and the cause of Scottish independence.

<https://www.parliament.scot/chamber-and-committees/votes-and-motions/S6M-14899>

Welsh Government Statement

National Hate Crime Awareness Week 2024: Jane Hutt MS, Cabinet Secretary for Social Justice, Trefnydd and Chief Whip

This week marks the launch of National Hate Crime Awareness Week 2024, the annual campaign that brings together partners to raise awareness of the impact of hate crime, the importance of reporting incidents and the support available.

The Welsh Government maintains our strong stance: hate has no home in Wales, and it will not be tolerated. ...

The National Hate Crime Statistics for England and Wales 2023/2024 ... show a 2% decrease in recorded hate crimes across Wales compared to 2022-23.

There were 5,929 recorded hate crimes across the four Welsh Police Force Areas of which:

- 3,632 (61%) were race hate crimes
- 1,139 (19%) were sexual orientation hate crimes
- 752 (13%) were disability hate crime
- 346 (6%) were religion hate crimes
- 306 (5%) were transgender hate crimes.

It is difficult to interpret hate crime statistics as we know many victims do not report what has happened to them. A 2% decrease in recorded hate crime in Wales could mean more incidents may be going unreported or it could mean fewer hate crimes are being committed. Regardless, it is clear there is still much to be done to ensure Wales has no place for hate. We are concerned about a 21% increase in religious hate crime in Wales, in comparison to the previous year with significant events in the Middle East coinciding with this increase. We are extremely concerned by reports of hate crime targeted towards Jewish and Muslim communities in Wales. We encourage members of these communities to report any hate incidents. ...

These statistics cover 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024 so they pre-date the impact of the violent disorder which affected the UK over the summer following the devastating attack in Southport. Although we did not see the level of disorder in Wales, the fear caused by the racist discourse which surrounded these incidents was palpable. ...

Online hate and misinformation remain a significant issue, as highlighted during the recent disorder across the UK. It is vital that social media and tech companies do everything they can to protect their users from online harms, such as hateful and misleading content. We remain committed to working with Ofcom in their new capacity as regulators of online safety in the UK.

The Welsh Government is proud to support National Hate Crime Awareness week. We will continue to tackle the root causes of hate and, as we stand up to hate, we will continue to support those who have been affected by it. We encourage communities across Wales to unite against those who seek to divide us and help us to continue to demonstrate that Wales is a cohesive community of communities.

To read the full statement see

<https://www.gov.wales/written-statement-national-hate-crime-awareness-week-2024>

Northern Ireland Assembly Members Statement

Yom Kippur

Steve Aiken (UUP): From just before sunset on Friday to dusk on Saturday marked Yom Kippur. Across the world but particularly in the homes of our many Jewish friends and colleagues, it is by observing their prayers that members of the Jewish faith seek to atone and ask God for his forgiveness. Yom Kippur culminates with Neilah and the sounding of the shofar. During the religious services, one of the most poignant moments is the saying of Yizkor, the memorial prayer for the recently deceased. Anyone with a degree of empathy will share in that with our Jewish community, this year of all years, on Yom Kippur. Equally, the attempts to denigrate that religious observance by some, including university student bodies, left-wing and pro-Hamas and pro-Hezbollah terrorist supporters or just those who cannot resist joining in with their base antisemitism, need to be roundly condemned. Last week, memorial services for the victims of 7 October were held in Belfast and Dublin. In the spirit of the Yizkor prayer, large numbers of Gentiles, including me, stood in solidarity with our Jewish friends and colleagues in Israel, the United Kingdom, Ireland and elsewhere. I thank the friends of the Jewish community who organised those events, especially the one in Belfast. I was pleased that the deputy First Minister attended and expressed solidarity on behalf of us to our beleaguered but still proud local Jewish community and to the victims of 7 October.

That was in marked contrast, however, to the event in Dublin, where neither the president nor the Taoiseach or the Tánaiste could find the time to attend the memorial to 1,119 victims of terror, torture and sexual violence, nor did they bother to attend any Yom Kippur memorials. Indeed, a Fine Gael councillor, Councillor Rane, even expressed base antisemitic tropes during a Dublin City Council debate. It seems that some members of society on this island are deemed to be less equal than others. It is also apparent to any dispassionate observer that the Irish Republic is more interested in opening embassies in Tehran and its parties more interested in inviting the Iranian embassy to their conferences than it is in tackling its ingrained and growing institutional antisemitism. While Dublin is happy to cloak itself in intolerance, it is good to see that many others are calling that out, especially in Brussels, Berlin and, above all, Washington. That, at least, gives reason for hope as Yom Kippur for the Hebrew year 5785 passes.

<https://aims.niassembly.gov.uk/officialreport/report.aspx?&eveDate=2024/10/14&docID=413431#4589549>

A report of the remarks made by Councillor Rane, referred to above, can be read at
<https://www.thejournal.ie/fine-gael-councillor-israel-6509836-Oct2024/>

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Holocaust

UK Parliament Early Day Motion

Jim Shannon (DUP) [248] Celebrating the life of Holocaust survivor Lily Ebert MBE BEM – That this House notes with deep sadness the passing of Holocaust survivor Lily Ebert MBE BEM at the age of 100; acknowledges her extraordinary life of resilience, courage, and dedication to Holocaust education and remembrance; recognises that with the passing of each Holocaust survivor, it feels as though another thread of connection to those silenced voices is lost, and that while books, recordings, and historical research continue to preserve these stories, the irreplaceable value of personal interaction and living memory diminishes; further notes that the death of a survivor is a solemn reminder

that we are approaching the end of an era in which direct witnesses to the atrocities of the Holocaust still walk among us; expresses concern that as the Holocaust transitions from a living memory to a purely historical event, it risks becoming further removed from our collective consciousness, which is deeply unsettling; and calls on the Government and all educational institutions to redouble efforts to ensure that the lessons of the Holocaust are never forgotten, and that future generations remain vigilant against intolerance, hate, and genocide in all its forms, continuing the vital legacy left by survivors like Lily Ebert.

<https://edm.parliament.uk/early-day-motion/62581>

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Israel

See also Commons written answer 6865 “Israel: Palestinians”, Welsh Government Statement “National Hate Crime Awareness Week 2024”, and NI Assembly Members Statement “Yom Kippur” that are included in the Home Affairs section above, and Commons written answers 6411 “Immigration: Lebanon”, 6988 and 6792 “Lebanon: British Nationals Abroad”, and 6793 “Middle East: British Nationals Abroad”, and the FCDO press release “UK announces sanctions against Iranian military figures and organisations following attack on Israel” that are included in the Foreign Affairs section below.

House of Commons Oral Answers

Topical Questions: Defence

The Secretary of State for Defence (John Healey): The middle east continues to be a major focus for the Government. Last week, we passed one year since the horrifying Hamas terror attack on Israel. We marked the memory of those who were murdered, we grieved with the families of the hostages who are still held, and we share the agony of so many Palestinians over the civilians who have been killed since.

We are working on an immediate ceasefire in Gaza. In Lebanon we are working to reduce the risk of further escalation, and a ceasefire and the UN plan for a buffer zone are vital to that. In addition, last week I visited British troops in Cyprus, where contingency plans are in place to deal with further developments. On behalf of the House, I thank them for their professionalism and their dedication. ...

<https://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2024-10-14/debates/8E23744B-7B2B-4276-BB6B-F805428B7BBC/TopicalQuestions#contribution-2EC3CB92-10D8-4EA1-830D-EF9753ADD365>

Topical Questions: Defence

Shokat Adam (Independent) [900614] The 2,000 lb bombs dropped on innocent civilians in Gaza and Lebanon led to the heinous and unimaginable scenes we saw over the weekend of newborn babies being killed and young children being burned alive. These bombs are being dropped by F-35 fighter jets, and we supply parts for F-35 fighter jets. When will we stop doing that and adhere to international conventions?

John Healey: We have made decisions on the suspension of arms sales to Israel, and we have set out the details of those to the House. We are working, as well as calling, for an immediate ceasefire in Gaza so that all hostages can get out, all the aid needed by the Palestinians can be flooded in, and the first steps can be taken towards the political solution that is ultimately the best guarantor of two states and a permanent peace in the area.

<https://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2024-10-14/debates/8E23744B-7B2B-4276-BB6B-F805428B7BBC/TopicalQuestions#contribution-BB58BA4F-24DE-4863-AA78-08E61D5A71AD>

Topical Questions: Defence

Alec Shelbrooke (Conservative): In light of the latest Hezbollah attack on Israel, will the Secretary of State assure the House that we will continue to supply defensive equipment to Israel to help it defend itself against Iranian proxies?

John Healey: We have an unshakeable commitment to the right of Israel to defend itself and we have demonstrated in the past a willingness to stand with Israel, particularly when it has been under direct under attack from Iran.

<https://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2024-10-14/debates/8E23744B-7B2B-4276-BB6B-F805428B7BBC/TopicalQuestions#contribution-A39DC2F5-345B-4B46-AFF3-70592079F0B1>

House of Commons Written Answers

The following two questions both received the same answer

Intelligence Services: Detainees

Imran Hussain (Independent) [6278] To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what steps he is taking to ensure compliance by personnel with the Government's Consolidated Guidance to Intelligence Officers and Service Personnel on the Detention and Interviewing of Detainees Overseas, and on the Passing and Receipt of Intelligence Relating to Detainees, published in July 2010, in the context of intelligence received from Israeli sources.

Imran Hussain (Independent) [6279] To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what steps he is taking to ensure compliance by personnel with the Government's Principles relating to the detention and interviewing of detainees overseas and the passing and receipt of intelligence relating to detainees, published in July 2019, in the context of intelligence received from Israeli sources.

Luke Pollard: The Principles relating to the detention and interviewing of detainees overseas, which replaced the Cabinet Office Consolidated Guidance, apply to and must be followed by members of the Armed Forces and Ministry of Defence employees. The Principles apply to all nations.

As part of pre-deployment procedures, Defence personnel receive theatre specific training, which includes guidance and training on The Principles for personnel who may need to apply it in their work.

If Defence personnel receive intelligence from a foreign authority that has originated from a detainee and there is a risk the detainee has been or will be subject to human rights violations, then a formal assessment of the situation is undertaken and if the concerns remain valid, Defence Ministers will consider a full range of appropriate actions.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2024-10-04/6278>

and

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2024-10-04/6279>

The Principles referred to above can be read at

<https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/5d2f7e3ae5274a14eb8e0494/20190718>

[The Principles relating to the detention and interviewing of detainees overseas.pdf](#)

International Fund for Israeli-Palestinian Peace

Blair McDougall (Labour) [6797] To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign,

Commonwealth and Development Affairs, whether he has taken steps to work with international stakeholders on creating an international fund for Israel-Palestinian Peace.

Hamish Falconer: This government has prioritised working to end this conflict and secure the safe release of hostages, in co-ordination with international partners, since day one. We will continue to use every diplomatic lever to bring about a ceasefire deal as the first step towards long-term peace and security for Israelis and Palestinians, and the wider region. The Foreign Secretary has raised the issue of securing long-term peace in all his meetings with counterparts across the region, in addition to the US, Germany and France. The UK will play our full diplomatic role in ending this conflict and creating a safe and secure Israel alongside a viable and sovereign Palestinian state.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2024-10-04/6797>

Israel: Palestinians

Imran Hussain (Independent) [6286] To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what steps his Department is taking to support the International Criminal Court in respect of its investigation into the Situation in the State of Palestine; and whether he plans to increase support for that investigation in the context of the Government's assessment that there is clear risk of certain military exports to Israel being used in violations of international humanitarian law.

Hamish Falconer: We await the Pre-Trial Chamber's decision on the Prosecutor's application for arrest warrants, after which all normal procedural steps would need to take their course. The UK respects the independence of the Court in investigating the situation in Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territories. We support Israel's right to act in self-defence, in line with international humanitarian law.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2024-10-04/6286>

Information about the International Criminal Court Investigation referred to above can be read at <https://www.icc-cpi.int/palestine>

Gaza: Air Force

Imran Hussain (Independent) [6280] To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, whether information from Israeli sources has been used to inform the operation of surveillance flights conducted by the RAF over Gaza since 1 December 2023.

Luke Pollard: The unarmed UK surveillance aircraft are employed for the sole purpose of increasing our chances of locating the hostages. We are unable comment further on detailed intelligence matters for operational security reasons.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2024-10-04/6280>

The following four questions all received the same answer

Israel: Air Force

John McDonnell (Independent) [5835] To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how many Israeli Air Force operated aircraft (a) landed in and (b) took off from British owned territory from 6 February to 4 July 2024.

John McDonnell (Independent) [5836] To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how many Israeli Air Force operated aircraft have (a) landed and (b) taken off from British territory since 5 July 2024.

RAF Akrotiri

John McDonnell (Independent) [5840] To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, whether any Israeli Air Force operated planes have landed at RAF Akrotiri since 7 October 2023. **USA: Military Bases**

John McDonnell (Independent) [5841] To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, whether the US air force has used UK military bases (a) in Britain and (b) elsewhere for

the transport of (i) military equipment and (ii) munitions to Israel since 7 October 2023.

Luke Pollard: For operational security reasons and as a matter of policy, the Ministry of Defence will neither confirm, deny, nor comment on any foreign nations' military aircraft movement or operations within UK airspace or UK overseas bases.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2024-10-04/5835>

and

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2024-10-04/5836>

and

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2024-10-04/5840>

and

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2024-10-04/5841>

Gaza: Peace Negotiations

Chris Law (SNP) [6296] To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what assessment he has made of the progress of Qatari-led negotiations for a ceasefire in Gaza; whether the UK has a role in that process; and what his policy is on an immediate ceasefire and release of hostages.

Hamish Falconer: We want to see an immediate ceasefire, the release of all the hostages detained by Hamas and more aid entering Gaza. An immediate ceasefire is the first step towards a lasting solution. The Prime Minister - along with other G7 Leaders - has fully endorsed efforts by the US, Qatar and Egypt to reach a comprehensive deal in line with United Nations Security Council Resolution 2735. We also continue to use our diplomatic efforts to find a resolution and to create a safe and secure Israel, alongside a viable and sovereign Palestinian state.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2024-10-04/6296>

UNSCR 2735, referred to above, can be read at

[https://undocs.org/en/S/RES/2735\(2024\)](https://undocs.org/en/S/RES/2735(2024))

Gaza and Lebanon: Ceasefires

Claire Hanna (SDLP) [6606] To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, whether he has had discussions with his Israeli counterpart on implementing an immediate ceasefire in (a) Lebanon and (b) Gaza.

Hamish Falconer: A resolution to this conflict has been a priority since day one of this government - the Foreign Secretary has visited Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territories twice and the Prime Minister has spoken to both PM Netanyahu and President Abbas. We were the first G7 country to call for the implementation of an immediate ceasefire between Lebanese Hizballah and Israel on 19 September. The Foreign Secretary spoke with Israeli Foreign Minister Katz on 2 October, and we continue to work in lockstep with our allies to de-escalate the situation and urge all parties to end this cycle of violence.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2024-10-04/6606>

Israel: Palestinians

Blair McDougall (Labour) [6798] To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what steps his Department has taken in the context of the G7's commitment to support Israeli-Palestinian civil society peacebuilding.

Hamish Falconer: The Foreign Secretary and I have stressed the need for an immediate ceasefire in our conversations with Israeli, Arab and regional leaders. The Foreign Secretary reiterated this message during visits to the region on 14-15 July and 31 July - 1 August and during his joint visit to Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territories with his French counterpart on 16 August. The Prime Minister has also joined international leaders in this call.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2024-10-04/6798>

The G7 commitment referred to above can be read at

<https://www.g7italy.it/wp-content/uploads/Apulia-G7-Leaders-Communique.pdf>

The following two questions both received the same answer

Israel: Palestinians

Peter Bedford (Conservative) [7336] To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what assessment he has made of the implications for his policies of reports that UNRWA staff members were named as Hamas operatives planning attacks against Israel from the Al-Jawni School in Gaza.

Palestinians: Teachers

Peter Bedford (Conservative) [7337] To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what assessment he has made of the extent of the involvement of teachers working in schools run by the UN Relief and Works Agency with Hamas; and whether any UK funding of that UN body is conditional.

Hamish Falconer: We were appalled by the allegations that United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) staff were involved in the 7 October attacks against Israel. The Secretary-General and the Commissioner General of UNRWA took these allegations seriously and acted decisively. We expect robust processes to continue to be followed. UNRWA have confirmed that a Hamas leader killed in Lebanon, Fatah Sherif, was a staff member, suspended without pay while under investigation, and that the termination of his employment was imminent. We take this very seriously; UNRWA must meet the highest standards of neutrality as laid out in Catherine Colonna's report, including staff vetting and acting swiftly when concerns arise. The UK has allocated £1 million to support UNRWA to implement the report's recommendations. The FCDO will continue its own annual assessment of UK funding to UNRWA, which plays a vital role in saving lives in Gaza.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2024-10-04/7336>

and

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2024-10-04/7337>

The Colonna Report, referred to above, can be read at

https://www.un.org/sites/un2.un.org/files/2024/04/unrwa_independent_review_on_neutrality.pdf

Occupied Territories: Development Aid

Ellie Chowns (Green) [7168] To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, with reference to paragraph 279 of the International Court of Justice Advisory Opinion entitled Legal Consequences Arising From The Policies and Practices of Israel in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, Including East Jerusalem, published on 19 July 2024, if he will take steps to uphold the direction not to render (a) aid and (b) assistance in maintaining the situation created by Israel's presence in the Occupied Palestinian Territory.

Hamish Falconer: We respect the International Criminal Court's independence and impartiality. We continue to call on Israeli authorities to exercise restraint, adhere to international law and clamp down on the actions of those who seek to inflame tensions. We are deeply concerned by the ongoing Israeli Defence Force military operation in the occupied West Bank and the attacks from Palestinian militants. We continue to press Israel to take all possible steps to avoid civilian casualties; allow the free passage of aid into Gaza; and prevent interference with humanitarian operations. We have been clear that if Israel's personnel are responsible for incidents, they should be held accountable.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2024-10-04/7168>

The ICJ Advisory Opinion referred to above can be read at

<https://www.icj-cij.org/sites/default/files/case-related/186/186-20240719-adv-01-00-en.pdf>

Gaza: Drinking Water

Mary Glendon (Labour) [6233] To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what diplomatic steps he is taking to help increase the amount of potable water in Gaza.

Hamish Falconer: As part of the wider ask for greater aid access into Gaza, this government, including the Foreign Secretary, have consistently raised the need for greater access to water supplies, and the opening of vital water lines, with Israel. Through UK funding to humanitarian agencies, including United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East, United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF) and UK-Med, we are also providing essential healthcare to civilians in Gaza, including activities to improve water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH). On 7 August, on her visit to Jordan, the Minister of State for Development announced £6 million of funding for UNICEF. The package will help tens of thousands of Gazans access food and water, as well as health, education and wellbeing services. The UK has also committed £1.2 million in co-funding with Kuwait to support UNICEF's WASH work in Gaza.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2024-10-04/6233>

The announcements referred to above can be read at

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/development-minister-calls-for-peace-and-security-in-middle-east-announcing-new-aid-for-gaza-on-first-trip-to-region>

and

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/uk-and-kuwait-agree-new-partnership-to-provide-vital-aid-in-gaza-and-yemen>

Gaza: Humanitarian Aid

Mary Glendon (Labour) [6230] To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what diplomatic steps he is taking to help humanitarian bodies access northern Gaza.

Hamish Falconer: The UK Government is very concerned about the worsening humanitarian situation in Gaza, including the deteriorating access to northern Gaza. As set out in the Foreign Secretary's statement on 2 September, Israel could and must do more to ensure that humanitarian aid reaches civilians in Gaza. The Prime Minister reaffirmed the need for greater aid access in his statement to the UN General Assembly on 26 September. The Foreign Secretary, working with international partners, continues to press Israeli leaders to ensure aid can flow freely into and through Gaza.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2024-10-04/6230>

The Foreign Secretary's Statement referred to above can be read at

<https://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2024-09-02/debates/F5A06C09-84E1-4788-AF6F-E1560E2B25D3/MiddleEastUpdate#contribution-78DA6459-BB53-4645-8872-CB7C4F535069>

The Prime Minister's Statement referred to above can be read at

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/pm-united-nations-general-assembly-speech-26-september-2024>

Gaza: Humanitarian Aid

Adrian Ramsay (Green) [7316] To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what estimate his Department has made of the number of UK aid trucks reaching Gaza in (a) September and (b) October 2024; what steps he is taking with international counterparts to tackle constraints reportedly imposed by the Israeli

Government on the number of aid trucks entering Gaza; and if he will make an estimate of the average daily number of (i) aid trucks and (ii) tonnes of aid that were needed to meet the demand for aid in Gaza in the last month.

Hamish Falconer: As set out in the Foreign Secretary's statement to the House on 2 September, this Government assesses that Israel must and should do more to ensure that life-saving food and medical supplies reach civilians in Gaza. The Foreign Secretary has raised repeatedly with Israeli leaders the need for a rapid increase of aid into Gaza, including during his joint visit with French Foreign Minister Stéphane Séjourné in August. I also raised this concern directly with the Israeli Ambassador to the United Kingdom during our meeting on 24 July. The UK does not operate independent trucking routes into Gaza, as this is more effectively managed by the UN and our other delivery partners. Truck numbers are a poor metric of humanitarian delivery, but UN figures show a daily average of 97 trucks (both humanitarian and commercial) entered Gaza in September, far below the 500 daily before 7 October 2023.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2024-10-04/7316>

The Statement referred to above can be read at

<https://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2024-09-02/debates/F5A06C09-84E1-4788-AF6F-E1560E2B25D3/MiddleEastUpdate#contribution-78DA6459-BB53-4645-8872-CB7C4F535069>

Gaza: Humanitarian Aid

Siân Berry (Green) [7277] To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, with reference to UNICEF's State of Palestine Nutrition Cluster Dashboard, updated 29 September 2024, whether he has had discussions with his Israeli counterpart on steps to increase access to (a) medical treatment and (b) food for children in Gaza.

Hamish Falconer: The people of Gaza face a humanitarian catastrophe. The whole population faces the risk of famine. As set out in the Foreign Secretary's statement on 2 September, Israel could and must do more to ensure that humanitarian aid reaches civilians in Gaza. The Prime Minister reaffirmed the need for greater aid access in his statement to the UN General Assembly on 26 September. The Foreign Secretary also continues to press Israeli leaders to ensure aid can flow freely into and within Gaza.

Through our support for UK-Med, (including a further £5.5 million announced on 14 July) we are helping to run field hospitals in Gaza. We are also supporting other agencies such as United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund and World Food Programme to provide health and nutrition surveillance and interventions.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2024-10-04/7277>

The Nutrition Cluster Dashboard referred to above can be read at

<https://www.nutritioncluster.net/country/state-palestine>

The Foreign Secretary's Statement referred to above can be read at

<https://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2024-09-02/debates/F5A06C09-84E1-4788-AF6F-E1560E2B25D3/MiddleEastUpdate#contribution-78DA6459-BB53-4645-8872-CB7C4F535069>

The Prime Minister's Statement referred to above can be read at

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/pm-united-nations-general-assembly-speech-26-september-2024>

The announcement referred to above can be read at

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/foreign-secretary-calls-for-immediate-ceasefire-in-gaza-on-first-visit-to-the-middle-east>

Gaza: Humanitarian Aid

Carla Denver (Green) [6880] To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, with reference to United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs' Humanitarian Situation Update No. 221 on the Gaza Strip, if he will have discussions with his Israeli counterpart on the proportion of (a) coordinated humanitarian movements in Gaza that were (i) denied and (ii) impeded in August 2024 and (b) planned World Health Organisation missions to Gaza between 13 and 18 September that were (A) significantly delayed and (B) denied.

Hamish Falconer: The UK Government is closely monitoring the impact of the conflict and is deeply concerned by UN reports that humanitarian access is becoming ever more difficult, particularly to northern Gaza. As set out in the Foreign Secretary's statement on 2 September, Israel could and must do more to ensure that humanitarian aid reaches civilians in Gaza. This was one of the factors in the UK Government's decision in September to suspend some arms export licences to Israel. The Prime Minister reaffirmed the need for greater aid access in his statement to the UN General Assembly on 26 September. The Foreign Secretary also continues to press Israeli leaders to allow unfettered aid access in Gaza.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2024-10-04/6880>

The Humanitarian Situation Update referred to above can be read at

<https://www.ochaopt.org/content/humanitarian-situation-update-221-gaza-strip>

The Foreign Secretary's Statement referred to above can be read at

<https://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2024-09-02/debates/F5A06C09-84E1-4788-AF6F-E1560E2B25D3/MiddleEastUpdate#contribution-78DA6459-BB53-4645-8872-CB7C4F535069>

The Export Licences decision referred to above can be read at

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-statements/detail/2024-09-02/hcws64>

The Prime Minister's Statement referred to above can be read at

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/pm-united-nations-general-assembly-speech-26-september-2024>

Gaza: Hospitals

Mary Glendon (Labour) [6231] To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what discussions he has had with the Israeli Government on the Israeli military's reported use of the Turkish-Palestinian Friendship Hospital in Gaza.

Hamish Falconer: The FCDO is closely monitoring the impact of the conflict in Gaza on access to medical facilities and healthcare, and we remain deeply concerned by reports that many medical facilities are no longer in use. We call on all parties to abide by international humanitarian law.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2024-10-04/6231>

Gaza: Health Services

Ellie Chowns (Green) [7171] To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, with reference to United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs' Humanitarian Situation Update No. 221 on the Gaza Strip, if he will have discussions with his Israeli counterpart on the (a) proportion of (i) hospitals and (ii) primary healthcare facilities in Gaza that are not fully functional and (b) the shortages in (A) fuel, (B) medicine and (C) other essential supplies affecting such healthcare facilities; and what steps he is taking to support healthcare facilities in Gaza.

Hamish Falconer: The FCDO is closely monitoring the impact of the conflict in Gaza on access to medical facilities and healthcare, and we are deeply concerned by reports of the destruction of hospitals and healthcare facilities. As set out in the Foreign Secretary's statement on 2 September, Israel could and must do more to ensure that humanitarian aid reaches civilians in Gaza. The Foreign Secretary

continues to press Israeli leaders to ensure aid can flow freely into and within Gaza. Through our support for UK-Med, (including a further £5.5 million announced on 14 July) we are helping to run field hospitals in Gaza. We are also supporting other agencies such as United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund and World Food Programme to support vulnerable families with lifesaving water, healthcare and specialist treatment for malnourished children.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2024-10-04/7171>

The Humanitarian Situation Update referred to above can be read at

<https://www.ochaopt.org/content/humanitarian-situation-update-221-gaza-strip>

The Statement referred to above can be read at

<https://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2024-09-02/debates/F5A06C09-84E1-4788-AF6F-E1560E2B25D3/MiddleEastUpdate#contribution-78DA6459-BB53-4645-8872-CB7C4F535069>

The announcement referred to above can be read at

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/foreign-secretary-calls-for-immediate-ceasefire-in-gaza-on-first-visit-to-the-middle-east>

Gaza: Humanitarian Aid

Mary Glendon (Labour) [6232] To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what diplomatic steps he is taking to help increase the amount of medical and surgical equipment entering Gaza.

Hamish Falconer: The humanitarian situation in Gaza is intolerable and deteriorating. During his recent visit to the region, the Foreign Secretary stressed the importance of the safe distribution of aid, including lifesaving medical supplies to civilians who desperately need them. The Prime Minister reaffirmed the need for greater aid access in his statement to the UN General Assembly on 26 September. It is the assessment of this Government that Israel can and must do more to ensure that aid can flow freely into and within Gaza.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2024-10-04/6232>

The Prime Minister's Statement referred to above can be read at

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/pm-united-nations-general-assembly-speech-26-september-2024>

Palestinians: Polio

Laura Kyrke-Smith (Labour) [7355] To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what steps he is taking to help ensure that all children in (a) Palestine and (b) Gaza have access to polio vaccination.

Hamish Falconer: The UK convened the August 2024 emergency session of the UN Security Council to drive urgent action to address the risk of a polio outbreak in Gaza. We are supporting delivery through our funding to the Global Polio Eradication Initiative (GPEI), alongside our wider support to United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund in Gaza. The Foreign Secretary noted the importance of the full and effective delivery of the polio vaccination campaign in his statement to the House on 2 September. The UK continues to work with international partners to reinforce the importance of pauses in military operation to allow the delivery of the second vaccination campaign this month. The UK also funds Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance, which is helping wider immunisation of children living in Gaza, the West Bank and within the Palestinian populations in Lebanon.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2024-10-04/7355>

The Statement referred to above can be read at

<https://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2024-09-02/debates/F5A06C09-84E1-4788-AF6F-E1560E2B25D3/MiddleEastUpdate#contribution-78DA6459-BB53-4645-8872-CB7C4F535069>

Gaza: Education

Ellie Chowns (Green) [7170] To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, with reference to United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs' Humanitarian Situation Update No. 221 on the Gaza Strip, if he will have discussions with his Israeli counterpart on (a) the impact of air strikes on schools and (b) the proportion of school-age children who are accessing learning spaces in Gaza.

Hamish Falconer: This Government is deeply concerned about the impact of the conflict on children, and the high level of destruction to civilian infrastructure in Gaza, including schools. The Prime Minister and Foreign Secretary continue to press Israeli leaders to take all steps to avoid civilian casualties and the importance of upholding International Humanitarian Law. The Foreign Secretary stated that he was appalled by the tragic loss of life as a result of the Israeli military strike on the al-Tabeen school. The UK supports humanitarian agencies such as United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East, United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund and United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs to provide education services to civilians in Gaza, including through UK funding to Education Cannot Wait, which delivers education to children in crisis.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2024-10-04/7170>

The Humanitarian Situation Update referred to above can be read at

<https://www.ochaopt.org/content/humanitarian-situation-update-221-gaza-strip>

Muhammed Bhar

Laura Kyrke-Smith (Labour) [7358] To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, whether he has made representations to his Israeli counterpart on the death of Muhammed Bhar.

Hamish Falconer: Whilst we have not raised this case specifically, the government does raise International Humanitarian Law compliance regularly with Israel. The Foreign Secretary last spoke with Israeli Foreign Minister Katz on 02 October. This Government is clear that International Humanitarian Law must be upheld, and civilians protected. The Foreign Secretary has raised issues of International Humanitarian Law compliance on several occasions with the Israeli government. We want to see an immediate ceasefire and we need the hostages returned immediately and unconditionally. We must see greater protection of civilians, a rapid increase in humanitarian aid to Gaza, and Israel to enable the UN and humanitarian agencies to be able to operate safely in Gaza.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2024-10-04/7358>

Israel: Lebanon

Adam Jogee (Labour) [6966] To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what discussions he has had with his counterparts in the Middle East on the situation in Lebanon.

Hamish Falconer: The Foreign Secretary spoke to Lebanese Prime Minister Mikati on 28 September, expressing deep concern over rising tensions and civilian casualties in Lebanon. They discussed the need for a negotiated solution to restore stability and security across the Blue Line. On 01 October, the Foreign Secretary spoke with Iranian Foreign Minister Aragchi, warning against actions that could push the region further towards the brink. The Foreign Secretary also spoke with Israeli Foreign Minister Katz on 02 October, and with the Foreign Ministers of Egypt, Iraq and Oman on 07 October. On 09 October, the Foreign Secretary visited leaders in Bahrain and Jordan, key regional partners for the UK, where he reiterated the UK's concern over the risk of escalation and miscalculation in the region and again called for an immediate ceasefire in Gaza and Lebanon.

Palestinians: Children

Kate Osamor (Labour Co-op) [6331] To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, if he will make an assessment of the potential implications for his policies of the report by Defense for Children International - Palestine entitled Targeting childhood, Palestinian children killed by Israeli forces and settlers in the occupied West Bank, published on 9 September 2024.

Hamish Falconer: The UK is deeply worried by the situation in the West Bank. The risk of instability is serious and the need for de-escalation urgent. The allegations in this report are deeply disturbing. Israel has a right to self-defence in line with international law, but we are deeply worried by the methods Israel has employed and by reports of civilian casualties, including children. Israel must respect the rights and vulnerabilities of children. We continue to call on Israeli authorities to exercise restraint, adhere to international law, take greater action to hold violent settlers to account and clamp down on the actions of those who seek to inflame tensions. The UK has sanctioned eight people and two groups responsible for perpetrating and inciting human rights abuses against Palestinian communities in the West Bank.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2024-10-04/6331>

The report referred to above can be read at

https://assets.nationbuilder.com/dcipalestine/pages/5323/attachments/original/1725884141/Targeting_Childhood_report.pdf?1725884141

House of Lords Oral Answers

Gaza Crisis

Lord Hain (Labour) To ask His Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of whether current negotiations will end the Gaza crisis.

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (Lord Collins of Highbury): My Lords, resolving this conflict has been this Government's priority since day one. It is now in PM Netanyahu's and Hamas leader Sinwar's hands to accept the deal on the table and agree urgently to a ceasefire in the long-term interests of Israelis and Palestinians. We are working alongside allies and partners to push for an immediate ceasefire, the release of all hostages, the upholding of international law, the protection of civilians—including the rapid increase of aid into Gaza—and a pathway to a two-state solution.

Lord Hain: My Lords, I agree with my noble friend the Minister, but does he also agree that this terrible crisis will not be resolved militarily? Netanyahu will not succeed in destroying Hamas as he has promised, not even by destroying Gaza, nor will he destroy Hezbollah, not even by damaging and destabilising Lebanon, and neither they nor Iran will succeed in destroying Israel. Unless Israel is to remain for ever under a state of permanent warfare siege, it is vital there is a negotiated settlement to end the horror. My fear is that that will not happen until this conflict escalates—as recent events seemingly make inevitable—to an all-out regional, maybe even global, war.

Lord Collins of Highbury: My Lords, we condemn Iran's attacks against Israel and recognise Israel's right to defend itself against Iranian aggression. At this moment, when tensions are at their peak, we call on Iran to step back from the brink. A regional war is in absolutely no one's interest. We are deeply concerned about the escalation of conflict in the region that threatens to destroy many innocent lives. That is why we are working tirelessly with partners, including allies in the region, to

establish immediate ceasefires, both in Gaza and along the blue line. In Gaza, a ceasefire must be the first step on the path to long-term peace and stability, with a two-state solution—a safe and secure Israel alongside a viable and sovereign Palestinian state—at its heart.

Lord Howard of Lympne (Conservative): My Lords, I ask the Minister now to take the opportunity to correct the misleading Answer given to your Lordships' House on 3 September by his noble friend the noble Baroness, Lady Chapman, when she told your Lordships' House that the Government were "required to suspend certain export licences"—[[Official Report, 3/9/24; col. 1065.](#)] to Israel. Is it not clear that what she said was in complete contradiction to what the Foreign Secretary told the other place on 2 September, when, in justifying the decision not to impose a ban on equipment for the F35, he made it plain that the Government had discretion on whether to ban or not?

Lord Collins of Highbury: The simple fact of the matter is that we have responded to the arms embargo based on an assessment of Israel's compliance with international humanitarian law. In that assessment, we have made decisions on suspending export licences that we assess do not risk facilitating military operations. They include 60 military items—for example, trainer aircraft and other naval equipment—and other non-military items, such as food-testing chemicals, and telecoms and data equipment. On exports, the F35 programme covered in principle by this suspension is for parts that can be identified as going directly to Israel. However, this is an international programme where we cannot be absolutely certain where those parts are going. That is why we have covered it in relation to the F35. The noble Lord can be assured that we will be determined to comply with international humanitarian law and will take the necessary steps where appropriate.

Lord Singh of Wimbledon (Crossbench): My Lords, recorded history states that Palestinians were forcibly removed from the homes that they had lived in for centuries, by the Stern Gang, Irgun Zvai Leumi and others whom we then called terrorists, to create the State of Israel in 1948. Does the Minister agree that it is shameful and beyond belief that, in the 70 years that have passed, instead of helping displaced Palestinians to build a new life, the West has been selling arms to Israel to bomb schools, hospitals and even UN refugee centres in Gaza and the West Bank, killing tens of thousands of innocent men, women and children in atrocities condemned by the UN and all human rights organisations?

Lord Collins of Highbury: My Lords, the noble Lord mentioned 1948. The State of Israel exists and was approved of legally under international law. There is a duty on us all to defend its right to exist. However, that is no excuse for any breaches by any party to international humanitarian law. I reassure the noble Lord that we as a Government will be determined to uphold international law and condemn whichever side commits offences against it. What we obviously need to do, as we have done since 1948, is to defend Israel's right to exist and promote a two-state solution, whereby a Palestinian state can live in harmony with its neighbours. That is the vital next step, and I am sure that it will achieve peace and security for all.

Lord West of Spithead (Labour): My Lords, the IRGC controls and co-ordinates Hezbollah, Hamas and the Houthis in fighting Israel. Will we proscribe this organisation that causes such damage?

Lord Collins of Highbury: The noble Lord has participated in many debates where I have called for something similar when I was in opposition. This is a matter for the Home Office, and my Foreign Office colleagues are in consultation with it. What we must do is ensure that all actions that are terrorist in nature—and certainly those that attack British citizens on British soil—are properly addressed. I assure the noble Lord that we take these issues very seriously.

Lord Purvis of Tweed (Liberal Democrat): My Lords, the evacuation orders by the IDF in north Gaza for 400,000 people are the equivalent of relocating the city of Manchester to

an area where there is no shelter, no security, scarce food supplies and no medicine. In particular, three-quarters of all water and sanitary health facilities have been destroyed. If the UK has no active role in bringing about an overall peace agreement, can it use its good offices to ensure that there is some kind of agreement that water and sanitary health provision, which directly affects girls and young women more than anybody else, cannot be a victim of this conflict?

Lord Collins of Highbury: The noble Lord knows of my concern about this issue and our absolute determination. The Prime Minister and the Foreign Secretary have made it clear that we want the fullest access for humanitarian aid into Gaza. That is vital. We remain concerned that over 85% of the Gaza Strip is now under evacuation orders, including new orders in the north that are causing serious distress to civilians and impacting on those humanitarian operations. We will make sure that all sides know of our concern and that we have the access to deliver the sort of support that the noble Lord has highlighted.

Lord Callanan (Conservative): My Lords, in July, the new Government resumed funding for the United Nations Relief and Works Agency, which had been suspended by the last Conservative Government. In August, the UN then admitted that some of its staff may have been involved in the 7 October Hamas massacre and fired nine of them. What is the Minister doing to ensure that UNRWA properly vets its staff? Does he agree that it is completely unacceptable that UK taxpayers' cash may have been used to finance those Hamas atrocities?

Lord Collins of Highbury: I think the noble Lord knows that this Government, and the last Government, recognise the essential role of UNRWA in distributing aid into Gaza. However, that does not take away the concern about those who may have participated in the horrific events of 7 October. We have supported the Colonna review and will be ensuring that UNRWA and the United Nations take actions to ensure that that report is fully implemented. We are working with the Secretary-General and have resumed funding based on those assurances. It is appalling that nine members of UNRWA were involved in those atrocities, and we welcome UNRWA's decisive action and support its decision to terminate the contracts of those individuals. This Government are absolutely committed, as were the previous Government, to ensuring that we can get aid into Gaza where it is most needed, and UNRWA is the vehicle to do that.

<https://hansard.parliament.uk/lords/2024-10-14/debates/8E314A2D-E460-438D-8820-D0E4D851AD68/GazaCrisis>

The Colonna Review, referred to above, can be read at

https://www.un.org/sites/un2.un.org/files/2024/04/unrwa_independent_review_on_neutrality.pdf

House of Commons Library Briefing

Military action: Parliament's role

<https://researchbriefings.files.parliament.uk/documents/CBP-10001/CBP-10001.pdf>

Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office

New UK sanctions target illegal outposts and organisations supporting extremist Israeli settlers in the West Bank

... The Foreign Secretary has announced sanctions in response to continued violence by extremist Israeli settlers in the occupied West Bank.

Today's measures target three settler outposts and four organisations that have supported,

incited and promoted violence against Palestinian communities in the West Bank. Settler violence often seeks to force Palestinians to leave their homes, and seize their land for the construction of outposts, which are illegal under both international and Israeli law.

The measures follow an unprecedented rise in settler violence in the West Bank over the last year, with the UN recording over 1,400 attacks by settlers against Palestinian communities since October 2023.

The month of October sees the beginning of the olive harvest in the West Bank, an important time both culturally and economically for Palestinians. It has traditionally suffered spikes in violence as organised settler groups disrupt and attack Palestinians.

The measures taken today are part of wider UK efforts to support a more stable West Bank, which is vital for the peace and security of both Palestinians and Israelis.

Foreign Secretary David Lammy said: When I went to the West Bank earlier this year, on one of my first trips as Foreign Secretary, I met with Palestinians whose communities have suffered horrific violence at the hands of Israeli settlers.

The inaction of the Israeli government has allowed an environment of impunity to flourish where settler violence has been allowed to increase unchecked. Settlers have shockingly even targeted schools and families with young children.

Today's measures will help bring accountability to those who have supported and perpetrated such heinous abuses of human rights. The Israeli government must crack down on settler violence and stop settler expansion on Palestinian land. As long as violent extremists remain unaccountable, the UK and the international community will continue to act.

The illegal settler outposts sanctioned today - Tirzah Valley Farm Outpost, Meitarim Outpost, and Shuvi Eretz Outpost - have been involved in facilitating, inciting, promoting or providing support for activity that amounts to a serious abuse of the right of Palestinians not to be subjected to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment.

The four organisations sanctioned today are Od Yosef Chai Yeshiva, Hashomer Yosh, Torat Lechima and Amana.

Od Yosef Chai Yeshiva is a religious school embedded in the Yitzhar settlement known to promote violence against non-Jewish people.

Hashomer Yosh is a non-governmental organisation that provides volunteers for illegal outposts, including Meitarim Outpost (also sanctioned today). Meitarim was founded by the extremist settler Yinon Levy, who the UK sanctioned in February.

Torat Lechima is a registered Israeli charity that has been documented as providing financial support to illegal settler outposts linked with acts of violence against Palestinian communities in the West Bank.

Amana operates in practice as a commercial construction company. Amana has overseen the establishment of illegal outposts and provides funding and other economic resources for Israeli settlers involved in threatening and perpetrating acts of aggression and violence against Palestinian communities in the West Bank.

To read the full press release see

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/new-uk-sanctions-target-illegal-outposts-and-organisations-supporting-extremist-israeli-settlers-in-the-west-bank>

Meeting between EU High Representative and Vice-President and Foreign Secretary: joint press release, 14 October 2024

... The Foreign Secretary and the High Representative ... shared their deep concern about spiralling violence in the Middle East and call for an immediate ceasefire across the Israel-Lebanon border; and in Gaza for the release of all hostages, unhindered access for humanitarian aid and renewed focus on a two-state solution. They underline their unwavering support to UNIFIL's role. It is vital that peacekeepers and civilians are

protected. They fully support UNIFIL's work in South Lebanon, which is mandated in UN Resolution 1701.

They condemn Iranian attacks on Israel and its supply of ballistic missiles to Russia for use against Ukraine and are committed to sanction Iran's regime on that account.

In the light of a difficult geopolitical context, the High Representative and the Foreign Secretary reaffirmed the importance of the relationship between the European Union and the United Kingdom for European security and defence and agreed to advance work towards a security partnership to address common threats and challenges. ...

To read the full press release see

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/joint-press-release-on-the-meeting-between-high-representativevice-president-josep-borrell-and-the-uk-foreign-secretary-david-lammy>

UNSCR 1701, referred to above, can be read at

[https://undocs.org/en/S/RES/1701\(2006\)](https://undocs.org/en/S/RES/1701(2006))

Statement by Foreign Ministers of France, Germany, Italy & the UK

We, the Foreign Ministers of France, Germany, Italy and the United Kingdom express our deep concern in the wake of recent attacks by IDF on UNIFIL bases, which have left several peacekeepers injured. These attacks must stop immediately. We condemn all threats to UNIFIL's security.

Any deliberate attack against UNIFIL goes against international humanitarian law and United Nations Security Council Resolution 1701. The protection of peacekeepers is incumbent upon all parties to a conflict.

We call on Israel and all parties to uphold their obligations to ensure the safety and security of UNIFIL personnel at all times and to allow UNIFIL to continue carrying out its mandate. We reaffirm the essential stabilizing role played by UNIFIL in southern Lebanon. We underscore the importance of the United Nations in resolving armed conflict and mitigating the humanitarian impact.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/statement-by-foreign-ministers-of-france-germany-italy-the-uk>

UNSCR 1701, referred to above, can be read at

[https://undocs.org/en/S/RES/1701\(2006\)](https://undocs.org/en/S/RES/1701(2006))

Updated Travel Advice: Israel

<https://www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice/israel>

Updated Travel Advice: The Occupied Palestinian Territories

<https://www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice/the-occupied-palestinian-territories>

United Nations

Half Billion Children Trapped in Conflict Face Grave Offenses, Third Committee Told, as Speaker Stresses 'Children Innocent on Both Sides'

Nearly half a billion children are now living in conflict zones worldwide, exposed to severe human rights violations, delegates told the Third Committee (Social, Humanitarian, and Cultural) ... calling for safe and unimpeded humanitarian access. ...

... Concurrently, they warned against the devastating impact of conflicts on children's mental health, causing lifelong trauma and vulnerability to radicalization.

Over 15,000 children in Gaza have been violently killed by the blacklisted Israeli occupying forces, with over 20,000 missing, buried under the rubble or in mass graves, said **the observer for the State of Palestine**. “Thousands have been maimed and their limbs amputated, with Gaza becoming the home of the largest number of amputee children in modern history,” she stated. Every single child in Gaza is out of school as Israel destroyed 80 per cent of educational facilities there. Moreover, every single child there has been exposed to deeply distressing trauma and needs urgent psychosocial support. She called for halting arms transfers to Israel and enforcing International Court of Justice orders, stressing that “Israel won’t stop until the provision of weapons stops”.

Condemning Israel’s attacks against Palestinian and Lebanese children, **Kuwait’s delegate** voiced concern over the “horrifying” 250 per cent increase in child fatalities in the West Bank in 2024. Continuing in their “clear disregard for international laws and norms,” Israeli forces have killed more than 100 children in 11 days during its aggression on Lebanese territory, she said, adding that the psychological trauma will affect children for life. She denounced Israel’s targeted strikes on schools run by United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), warning that an education gap will affect future generations. “There is no excuse for killing children regardless of their colour, race or affiliation,” she stated, stressing that “children’s rights are not just words”.

Israel “thirsts for blood,” said **Syria’s representative**, condemning the aggressor’s brutal crimes against children in Palestine, Lebanon and his country. Recalling Israeli strikes on a densely populated area of Damascus on 8 October, killing 9 people - including 3 girls - he urged the country to end its violent occupation of the Syrian Golan. ...

The representative of Yemen underlined that those who occupy the territories of others and import settlers to the colonized lands in the name of religion bear all responsibility for anything that happens to them. “We are now eyewitnesses to the continuation of Israel’s aggression against the Palestinian people,” he said, adding that “on both sides, children are innocent”. ...

Since 7 October 2023, said **the youth delegate of Israel**, “The lives of countless children have been shattered beyond measure.” In a single day of terror, Israeli children were brutally murdered, orphaned and abducted. In addition, hundreds of thousands of families have been or are still being evacuated from their homes due to a threat of attacks from Gaza, Lebanon, Yemen and Iran. “This disruption of childhood extends beyond just physical displacement,” she underscored, adding that “the psychological toll of living under such constant threat is immeasurable, potentially leaving lasting scars on an entire generation”. On the children who have returned from Hamas captivity, she said they did not receive proper nutrition, stayed in spaces unfit for living for many days, and were psychologically and physically tortured. Also, she added, “We must not forget the children who are still in captivity”. Asking if any State has spoken about the situation of children in Israel, she called on delegates to acknowledge the plight of all conflict-affected children, including those in Israel. ...

To read the full press release see

<https://press.un.org/en/2024/gashc4410.doc.htm>

The International Court of Justice Orders referred to above can be read at

<https://www.icj-cij.org/sites/default/files/case-related/192/192-20240126-ord-01-00-en.pdf>

and

<https://www.icj-cij.org/sites/default/files/case-related/192/192-20240328-ord-01-00-en.pdf>

and

<https://www.icj-cij.org/sites/default/files/case-related/192/192-20240524-ord-01-00-en.pdf>

World Health Organisation

Second round of polio vaccination in the Gaza Strip aims to vaccinate over half a million children

The second round of an emergency polio vaccination campaign is scheduled to start on 14 October 2024 in Gaza, to vaccinate an estimated 591 700 children under ten years of age with a second dose of the novel oral polio vaccine type 2 (nOPV2) vaccine.

This follows a [first round](#), which was successfully implemented from 1-12 September 2024 and vaccinated 559 161 children, or an estimated 95% of eligible children at governorate level, according to independently conducted post-campaign monitoring. As with the first round, the second round will have three phases, each involving three campaign days and one catch-up day. ...

Once again, meticulous planning, coordination and implementation will see an extensive network of teams vaccinating at selected health facilities and outreach posts. Mobile teams will actively reach out to families living in shelters, tents and camps for internally displaced people. Local teams will be deployed in areas that need special coordination to reach children, including those who could not receive vaccine in the first round. ...

More than 800 social mobilizers will reach out to families to raise awareness on the importance of taking the second dose as well as on the dates and locations. Radio spots, short message services (SMS) and all digital channels available in Gaza will also amplify these messages. This outreach will continue until the round concludes. ...

To cover the two rounds, 1.6 million doses of the vaccines were delivered in the past two months as well as 20 refrigerators, 10 freezers, 100 ice boxes, and 800 vaccine carriers — all equipment required to maintain vaccines at a temperature between 2 and 8°C.

Once again, a humanitarian pause will be a pre-requisite to implementing a successful second round, particularly to ensure all polio workers can operate in a safe and secure environment, and communities and families can obtain vaccination for children without fear.

A substantial constraint to the polio campaign will again be reaching children living in areas outside humanitarian pauses who were not covered in the last round. ...

WHO and UNICEF [renew their urgent request](#) to all parties to the conflict to implement the necessary humanitarian pauses in Gaza for this second round. This is particularly critical as new evacuation orders in the north of Gaza are threatening access to hospitals and protection of health facilities and health and community workers. Vaccination teams must be protected and allowed to conduct the campaigns safely. We urge all parties to ensure their protection, and that of health facilities and children. ...

To read the full press release see

<https://www.who.int/news/item/11-10-2024-second-round-of-polio-vaccination-in-the-gaza-strip-aims-to-vaccinate-over-half-a-million-children>

UNRWA

Second round of polio vaccination begins in the Gaza Strip

Today the second round of the polio vaccination campaign began in the middle area of the Gaza Strip. Over the coming 12 days, UNRWA and partners aim to vaccinate around 590,000 children under ten years of age with a second dose of the novel oral polio vaccine type 2 (nOPV2). ...

Speaking from the UNRWA Deir al-Balah health centre in Gaza middle area, Sam Rose, UNRWA Senior Deputy Director of Gaza Affairs, said, “Once again, it has been really encouraging to see hundreds of children getting their vaccines today at this UNRWA health centre. This polio campaign is critical, but while we protect children with vaccines, they will continue to die and suffer each day until there is a comprehensive and lasting ceasefire,

which is needed more urgently than ever.”

The polio vaccination campaign begins the morning after another deadly night in the Gaza Strip. An airstrike hit the Al Aqsa hospital compound where families were sheltering in tents, and just before another strike by Israeli Forces reportedly killed over 20 people at an UNRWA school sheltering displaced families in Nuseirat. The school was meant to be used as a polio vaccination point for children today. ...

UNRWA renews its urgent request to all parties to the conflict to implement the necessary humanitarian pauses in Gaza for this second round of vaccination. This is particularly critical as new evacuation orders in the north of Gaza are leaving tens of thousands of people trapped and causing additional waves of forced displacement, in addition to hugely undermining humanitarian operations in the area. ...

Without a ceasefire now, diseases will keep spreading and there will be more suffering.

To read the full press release see

<https://www.unrwa.org/newsroom/news-releases/second-round-polio-vaccination-begins-gaza-strip>

Two long weeks of intense Israeli Forces' airstrikes and ground operations: Philippe Lazzarini

Northern Gaza.

Two long weeks of intense Israeli Forces' airstrikes and ground operations.

Hundreds of Palestinians are reported killed, among them children.

More than 400,000 people continue to be trapped in the area.

The health system has all but collapsed.

We are not able to reach our teams due to telecommunications cuts. The UN has not been allowed to provide any assistance, including food since 30 September. The two crossing points into northern Gaza have been closed since.

Jabalia camp has been hit the most, some 50,000 people were forced to flee. Basic services, including from UNRWA, have been interrupted or forced to a halt including our UNRWA health centre while only two water wells are operational.

Such attacks, the sabotage of civilian infrastructure and the deliberate denial of critical assistance continue to be used as a tactic by the Israeli Authorities to force people to flee. Civilians are given no choice but to either leave or starve. International Humanitarian Law is clear: people cannot be displaced by force, civilians should be protected at all times + given access to basic necessities should they choose to stay.

In Gaza, too many red lines have been crossed. What might constitute war crimes can still be prevented.

CeasefireNow.

It is not too late to show courage & humanity.

<https://www.unrwa.org/newsroom/official-statements/two-long-weeks-intense-israeli-forces-airstrikes-and-ground-operations>

TOP

Foreign Affairs

House of Commons Written Answers

Special Envoy on Freedom of Religion or Belief

Chris Hinchliff (Labour) [7161] To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, whether he plans to appoint a Special Envoy on Freedom of

Religion and Belief.

Anneliese Dodds: This Government will champion freedom of religion or belief (FoRB) for all. No one should live in fear because of what they do, or do not believe in. Envoy roles are under Ministerial consideration and will be decided upon in due course. In the meantime, we will continue to use the strength of our global diplomatic network, including dedicated staff within the FCDO, to promote and protect FoRB around the world.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2024-10-04/7161>

Middle East: British Nationals Abroad

Deidre Costigan (Labour) [6793] To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what steps his Department is taking to help ensure the safety of British nationals and their dependents in the wider Middle East region in the context of escalating tensions.

Hamish Falconer: We continuously monitor the situation across the region. We advise all British Nationals and dependents to regularly check the FCDO's Travel Advice for the country which they are in, which is kept updated. Unless otherwise noted in Travel Advice, we maintain our usual consular services. We recommend affected people to subscribe to receive notifications when relevant Travel Advice changes. If there is a reason for our 'Register Your Presence' service to be launched in that country, this will also be noted on the Travel Advice. Meanwhile we continue to monitor the situation on the ground and maintain regular discussions with host governments and partners.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2024-10-04/6793>

Lebanon: British Nationals Abroad

Deidre Costigan (Labour) [6792] To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what steps his Department is taking to help protect British nationals and their dependents in Lebanon.

Hamish Falconer: The safety of British nationals is our number one priority. Our consular teams are working around the clock to support British nationals. Border Force and military stand ready to aid consular operations. We chartered a limited number of flights from Lebanon to support British nationals to leave the country in response to the deteriorating security situation. The latest charter flight left on 6 October. British nationals who remain in the country should register their presence, book the first available flight and leave now while commercial routes remain available. FCDO continues to advise against all travel to Lebanon.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2024-10-04/6792>

Lebanon: British Nationals Abroad

Adam Jogee (Labour) [6988] To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, how many UK citizens were in Lebanon on 1 October 2024.

Hamish Falconer: As of 7 October, 2100 British nationals have registered their presence in Lebanon. Any remaining British nationals who want to leave are urged to register their presence immediately. Based on our contacts so far, we anticipate that only a fraction of those registered want to leave due to their strong ties in the country. The UK has helped over 430 people leave on four UK government charter flights taking British nationals out of Lebanon. Due to reduced demand, no further charter flights are planned, but we will continue to monitor the situation closely.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2024-10-04/6988>

Immigration: Lebanon

Mohammad Yasin (Labour) [6411] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home

Department, whether she has made a recent assessment of the potential merits of implementing a (a) resettlement and (b) reunification scheme for citizens of Lebanon with family connections to the UK.

Seema Malhotra: We are deeply concerned by the rising tensions and civilian casualties in Lebanon.

Lebanese nationals who wish to come to the UK can do so via the existing range of routes available.

Any application for a UK visa will be assessed against the requirements of the Immigration Rules. Immediate family members of British citizens and those settled in the UK who wish to come and live in the UK can apply under one of the existing family visa routes.

There are also routes available for dependants of those who are in the UK on a work or student route.

Individuals with protection status or settlement on a protection route may sponsor their partner or child (under 18), to join or stay with them in the UK, providing they formed part of the pre-flight family unit before the sponsor fled their country to seek protection.

We are monitoring the situation in Lebanon closely and keeping all existing pathways under constant review.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2024-10-04/6411>

Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office

UK announces sanctions against Iranian military figures and organisations following attack on Israel

... The UK has ... announced a new round of sanctions targeting senior Iranian military figures and organisations for their role in attempting to destabilise the Middle East.

In response to Iran's attack against Israel on 1 October, today's package targets senior figures who facilitate this behaviour, in the Islamic Republic of Iran Army, Iran's Air Force and the IRGC Intelligence Organisation.

The package will also designate Farzanegan Propulsion Systems Design Bureau (FPSDB), which designs and manufactures parts that can be used in cruise missiles, as well as the Iranian Space Agency, which develops technologies that have applications in ballistic missile development.

Foreign Secretary David Lammy said: Despite repeated warnings, the dangerous actions of Iran and its proxies are driving further escalation in the Middle East.

Following its ballistic missile attack on Israel, we are holding Iran to account and exposing those who facilitated these acts.

Alongside allies and partners, we will continue to take necessary measures to challenge Iran's unacceptable threats and press for de-escalation across the region.

Today's announcement follows repeated warnings from the UK and international partners calling on Iran to cease its dangerous and escalatory activity across the Middle East.

It also follows the [G7 joint statement condemning Iran's missile attack on Israel](#) and outlined the necessary steps being taken in response.

The [Foreign Secretary also discussed Iran's actions with European partners at the EU Foreign Affairs Council today](#), where he continued to push for de-escalation across the region. ...

The UK will continue to work with international partners to hold Iran to account for its escalatory behaviour in the Middle East and its attempts to undermine global security.

The UK is clear that a wider regional conflict must be avoided at all costs and is committed to working with partners to secure a ceasefire on all sides.

To read the full press release see

Relevant Legislation ** new or updated today

UK Parliament

Assisted Dying for Terminally Ill Adults Bill

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/3741>

Education (Assemblies) Bill

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/3769>

Holocaust Memorial Bill

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/3421>

**** Palestine Statehood (Recognition)**

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/3771>

Delegated Powers and Regulatory Reform Committee Report

<https://bills.parliament.uk/publications/56407/documents/5166>

**** Terrorism (Protection of Premises) Bill**

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/3765>

Second Reading, House of Commons

[https://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2024-10-14/debates/02DF7C5F-C9E0-4CF2-9087-C294BCABFD79/Terrorism\(ProtectionOfPremises\)Bill](https://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2024-10-14/debates/02DF7C5F-C9E0-4CF2-9087-C294BCABFD79/Terrorism(ProtectionOfPremises)Bill)

Scottish Parliament

Assisted Dying for Terminally Ill Adults (Scotland) Bill

<https://www.parliament.scot/bills-and-laws/bills/assisted-dying-for-terminally-ill-adults-scotland-bil>

Gender Recognition Reform (Scotland) Bill

<https://www.parliament.scot/bills-and-laws/bills/gender-recognition-reform-scotland-bill>

Consultations ** new or updated today

Northern Ireland Assembly: Inquiry into Relationship and Sexuality Education (RSE) in Schools (closing date 29 October 2024)

<https://www.niassembly.gov.uk/assembly-business/committees/2022-2027/education/inquiries/inquiry-into-relationship-and-sexuality-education-rse-in-schools/>

Northern Ireland Executive: Draft Programme for Government 2024-2027 (closing date 4 November 2024)

<https://www.northernireland.gov.uk/PfG-consultation>

Curriculum and Assessment Review [England] (closing date 22 November 2024)

<https://consult.education.gov.uk/curriculum-and-assessment-team/curriculum-and-assessment-review-call-for-evidence/>

Equality and Human Rights Commission Code of practice for services, public functions and associations (closing date 3 January 2025)

<https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/equality/equality-act-2010/code-practice-services-public-functions-and-associations-consultation>

Burial and Cremation [Law Commission] (closing date 9 January 2025)

<https://lawcom.gov.uk/project/burial-and-cremation/>

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The Scottish Council of Jewish Communities (SCoJeC) is Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation SC029438